

The West Virginian

"THE PAPER THAT GOES HOME."

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MONDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 24, 1917.



FINE SUGGESTION.

LAST week's Red Cross Bulletin, printed Saturday, made mention of, and endorsed, a suggestion which originated with Paul Lange. The West Virginian begs leave to add its endorsement to that of the Red Cross. It would be a fine thing—fine for the people who have boys in the army, fine for the city of Fairmont and fine for the Republic—if this idea could be carried out, and we think that an effort ought to be made to carry it out. Not a perfunctory little attempt that will roll over and play dead if the first effort is not conspicuously successful, but a good, honest, whole souled effort that will not acknowledge the possibility of failure nor quit until everything is going smoothly.

Briefly Mr. Lange's idea is that all the people of Fairmont should meet once a month, say, to talk over and make plans for the welfare of the young men who have gone forth from this city to fight for their country and the cause of civilization. Letters from them could be read and many other things that would develop from time to time could be done.

At the start these meetings ought to be presided over by some superlatively tactful person who has an abundant supply of the milk of human kindness. This is no longer a small town. People do not know each other and all about each other as they do in smaller places. As they did in Fairmont only a few years back, for instance. But the common bond ought to draw together the people who have young relatives in the various branches of the national service, and if they all attended the meetings would be quite large at the beginning. Soon others would go—it would be hard to keep away from such a human gathering—and in the end genuine community meetings would result.

And that would, as we have said before, do the young soldiers, the town and the nation a lot of good. No one in Fairmont could take the lead in such a matter with better prospects of eventual success than Mayor Bowen. The Red Cross ought to put it in his hands and fix a date for the first meeting soon after the last of the National army soldiers get to camp. In the meantime the plan should be communicated to all the young men so that they could have good letters on hand for the opening gathering. We venture that those who are working on the railroads in France, in the hospitals back of the British line in Flanders and chasing U-boats in the broad Atlantic or serving in remote parts of the world with the marines could write letters that most of us would travel many miles to hear. Nor would the letters from the training camps be without interest. Let's get action on this right away.

THE GERMAN REPLY.

COMMENT on the German reply to the Pope's peace gesture yesterday ran a little too strong on the "unrepentant and unashamed" note to be of any marked value, it seems to us. Just at present Germany is an armed camp, and is ruled absolutely by as brutal a military machine as the world ever knew, but that does not alter the fact that the leaders of the machine are afraid of the German public and every step toward peace must be taken carefully and with nice calculation regarding its effect upon public opinion. Unless we keep that condition steadily in mind here in the United States we are apt to be surprised by the turn of events.

The German reply does not speak of peace in definite terms. They know at Berlin as well as they know at London, Paris and Washington the kind of terms that Germany must offer to bring the war to an end. But they also know at Berlin that if these terms or anything near them were mentioned starkly the German people, who in the main are ignorant of the desperation of the Teutonic situation, would first be shocked as no people has been shocked since the war began, and then, in all likelihood, would go to pieces in another way, and for another reason, but, for the purposes of the military situation, quite as badly as the Russians did.

Realizing this the military chiefs who dominate everything at Berlin ignore the past and even the fateful pres-

ent and talk about the future in the reply to the Pope. Their reply when taken in connection with the traditional German attitude toward limitation of armament and arbitration for international differences shows that the Potsdam crowd is looking for a soft place to light. If it can fool the world and through the Pope procure a peace that in fact would be a truce, well and good, but if that is impossible, why the German public will be familiarized with the fact that the war was a tragic blunder from start to finish, and the "terms" for which the world is clamoring will be stated in due time.

Chancellor Michaelis speaks of "the sick body of human society," but it is apparent that human society is not nearly so sick as the military oligarchy of Prussia. It knows that it cannot last more than another winter and it does not know what is going to happen to it when it finally throws up its hands in token of surrender, and that adds to the agony. Peace would be a simple thing for the master minds of Germany if they merely had to deal with the enemy.

COAL CONTROL'S FUTURE.

ACCORDING to a dispatch from Washington to the Public Ledger, of Philadelphia, government control and operation of soft coal mines is being seriously thought of in the national capital, and there is prospect that strong pressure will be brought to bear upon Dr. Harry A. Garfield, the coal administrator, in favor of it. The danger of a serious shortage in fuel, apparently, has alarmed public utilities and managers of industrial plants and they are beginning to rush to Washington and demand protection.

What the outcome of this sort of clamor will be no one can tell. It may be that it will depend largely upon the attitude of the operators themselves. The legislation under which the mining industry is being controlled is quite comprehensive. It gives the government such varied and vast powers that any effort to force its hand would quite likely prove a complete failure, and might prove expensive to those behind the movement.

For instance, in addition to the power to fix the price the President, if he deems it necessary, through the coal administrator, may in the interest of the national defense, require all producers to sell their product only to the United States through some agency he designates on a basis of a fair and just profit over and above the cost of production. Or the government can take over the plant and operate it outright. This latter power is so broad that under it the government can take one plant and let the next one alone. This provision was put in the act, apparently, so that there would be a method of controlling any "little band of wilful" operators.

Most of the uneasiness about fuel conditions this winter is due largely to the uncertainty which Dr. Garfield's delay in announcing his complete program has created. He has been away from Washington for some time, but according to dispatches from there, is expected early this week. If that means that we are to know before this week ends just what the government hopes to do in the matter coal men can begin to make plans and it will be possible to get some line upon what the production outlook for the winter is going to be. That may have the effect of putting production back to the condition which prevailed prior to August.

And that, plus an adequate car supply, might make it entirely unnecessary for the government to run amuck in the industry, taking over mines, commandeering output and generally breaking up trade relationships which operators have been years in building up, and upon which they depend for profitable business when the war ends and the war time powers of the government over the industry ends with it. The government can control the coal industry in its every detail and put the corporations and individuals that own the properties out of business for the duration of the war if it wants to. If it went the limit there would be confusion almost inextinguishable after the war is over. Indeed it might turn out that government control would never end. It is the better part of wisdom therefore for the operators to do what they can to keep the government's fingers out of their business as much as possible.

To the graduate nurses of West Virginia who are assembling here today for their state convention Fairmont extends a hearty welcome. Yours is a noble and self-sacrificing calling, and this city feels honored in having an opportunity to extend hospitality to you.

Because of some words that were passed in debate two members of the Argentine Chamber of Deputies fought a duel with swords Saturday, but action on the resolution to suspend diplomatic relations with Germany was held up because the foreign office at Berlin has made a hypocritical disavowal of Luxburg's actions. The punctilio goes in personal affairs, but the national honor can go hang. But that is before the country has been heard from on the suspension of action on the resolution.

Clarksburg is planning to make a vigorous kick against an increase in gas rates for that town. No wonder. They have got so used to boasting about cheap gas in Clarksburg that they will have to learn an entirely new booster song when the rates go up—and they are going to go up in spite of the kicks.

Senator LaFollette attacked the newspapers of the country during a speech he made at Toledo yesterday. He charged that they are controlled by the war party, the financial interests. This is old stuff. The first thing the Wisconsin solon knows some of the Berlin editors will be suing him for infringement.

Anyhow if the financial interests had conspired to bring on our entrance into the war—which they did not—they guessed badly, for they are going to pay most of the cost. And they had the experience of England before them to warn that this would be the case. The truth is that the United States went into the war to protect American interests and rights and the action was demanded not by the newspapers, nor the financial interests, nor any other class, but by the whole American people.

Yesterday Secretary of War Baker review the Rainbow division which is being prepared for transport to France at Mineola and the dispatches note the fact that it was the first time he had ever seen a whole division of United States soldiers on review. Which is a reminder that we have made some astonishing military advances in this country in the past few years. It is quite probable that previous to the time President Taft sent the regulars to the Mexican border to keep an eye on the situation in Mexico there were officers in the army who graduated from West Point and had spent years in the service who never had seen a whole division of United States troops at one time. That in spite of the fact that it is not so long ago that we fought a foreign war.

SHORT AND SNAPPY

A huge apple crop in New York state is reported, but this will have nothing whatever to do with prices—except possibly to raise them.—Charleston Mail.

It isn't long after Field Marshal Haig delivers an attack against the German forces until he delivers the goods.—Uniontown Evening Sentinel.

OUTBURSTS OF EVERETT TRUE

(BY CONDO)



Editorial Comment

on Current Subjects

CAUSE OF FUEL SHORTAGE AND HIGH PRICES.

Thos. K. Maher in Coal and Coke Operator.

After witnessing all of the more or less stirring events in the coal trade hereabouts, and also in the National and State capitals during the past year, an unbiased observer must be convinced that the price of coal is normal and without manipulation. In fact we are convinced the observer who stated that the trade was progressing absolutely true to form had given the situation close attention and mature judgment.

Let us look at the facts and see if the present so-called abnormal coal situation is not a perfectly normal condition, a perfectly natural condition, and a condition that was foreseen by those who took the pains to look the situation plainly in the face, and also a condition that is altogether likely to obtain for a long period, a period at least extending until two years after the termination of the present world war.

In the first place it will be recalled that the official reports issued by the Geological Survey disclose that the bituminous coal industry was lamentably and notoriously unprofitable for a period of 10 years prior to 1916, and, as a natural consequence of this condition, development did not keep pace with the average growth in all other branches of industry.

The world war came suddenly, and practically all immigration from Europe was arrested and, in addition, thousands of Austrian, Polish, Italian and other miners who had not become naturalized citizens of the United States were called to the colors and embarked for their native lands; the steel, copper and allied industries, after some hesitation, gradually revived, and were finally speeded up to a degree of activity unknown before.

The demands of the allies called for such unprecedented amounts of steel, copper and explosives, automobile trucks, etc., that a veritable boom in building of new factories and homes for their workmen resulted in a speeding up in the building industry. By the time the war was in progress 13 months business in all departments was going at an unprecedented pace.

The transportation system of the country, once the wonder of the world, began to show signs of distress as a result of unwise and short-sighted regulation, which prevented it from developing sufficiently to take care of increased industrial requirements. Railroad congestion at practically every industrial center in the country and on all railroads east of the Mississippi put in an appearance. Under these circumstances it possibly was natural for the railroads, when they found themselves unable to furnish all the transportation wanted, to select that which paid the highest rates. At any rate, from whatever cause, the mines were only furnished sufficient cars for half operation and the visible surplus of bituminous coal was slowly but surely vanishing.

The large buyers of coal, accustomed for years to telephoning the nearest coal office for their requirements, suddenly discovered that buyers from sections more remote from sources of supply had bought all the available supplies. Coal was moving from mines slowly and in ever decreasing quantities, the severe winter and scant anthracite supply threw a burden on the supply of that ideal domestic fuel; the smokeless and other high-grade coals were diverted to admiralty purposes and to industries along the Atlantic seaboard which had obeyed the call of full steam ahead to satisfy the never-ending call for more supplies from abroad. Steam coal, which had never been used as a domestic fuel, was in great demand all through the middle west, northwest and in Canada, and by the first of the year 1917, an unprecedented demand was experienced, with prices unheard of since the year of the great anthracite strike.

All kinds of investigations, Federal,

state and municipal, were started. Reputable business men were summoned before grand juries and other inquisitorial bodies, newspapers were filled with scare-head articles daily about the ravages of the coal "trust." Ignoring the fact that of all the great basic industries of the country, coal, alone, is absolutely without organization of any kind. During all of this time of excitement, of grand jury investigations, of denunciations of a long suffering industry, apparently coming temporarily into its own, we do not recall one single constructive thought or suggestion put forth by any of the doctors called or injected into the situation except those given by the coal man himself.

While the coal operator was being abused on all sides by demagogues and fake uplifters, he was spending his time and money trying to convince the railroad officials that a system of car distribution that permitted all the other great industries to operate 24 hours a day, while the mines could only operate five hours a day, would inevitably lead to a coal famine of long duration. The coal man was laughed at, and his prediction that an industry that could only furnish its labor with employment half of the time cannot retain its labor for long, was scoffed at. In this case the expected happened. The appeals for more cars fell upon deaf ears; the miners are gradually leaving the mines and taking employment where six days' employment is assured and overtime to be had by the amolitious. The result? Permanently higher prices for coal.

The consuming industries may as well recognize this fact now and prepare to acquire their own source of supply or adjust their costs to a higher plane. Indeed evidence is not lacking that the more far-sighted consumers in distant markets are actively on the lookout for properties that are already developed. The tendency to control prices by government action will but accelerate the determination of large consumers of coal to own their own source of supply because, in a free market, prices will bring coal, but in a controlled market, where all purchasers pay the same price, coal will, like kisses, go by favor.

The praiseworthy effort of the various governmental agencies to control the price of domestic coal and to eliminate speculators from the situation has the sympathy of the legitimate trade, but with costs mounting higher every day, too low a basis must not be insisted upon lest a too stringent control arrest development in this most important of all industries in this world crisis. He was a wise man who stated, "You cannot put business in a straight jacket and expect it to move naturally."

The experienced operators of the country, those who have large properties that they hope to work for years



Im going to prescribe

Resinol for that eczema

"I might give you a formal prescription, but what's the use? It would cost you more than a jar of Resinol and I shouldn't be nearly as sure of the results! You see, I have been using Resinol Ointment for over twenty years. During that time I have tried out dozens of new ways of treating skin troubles, but I have always come back to Resinol—I know that it stops itching at once, generally heals the eruption, and that it contains nothing which could irritate the skin. You can get a jar at any drug store."

after the present excitement has passed, have contended and contend today, that a price of \$8 to \$6 per ton f. o. b. mines is unjustifiable and is a menace to the coal industry. They further contend that with an 85 to 90 per cent. car supply, the actual coal requirements of the country can be met, and that prices will settle to a reasonable basis, cost of labor, supplies, etc., considered.

RUFF STUFF

Lamp in the paper that since the evacuation of Jacobstad by the Russians the "situation is serious" in that country.

Phaw, why pay tolls on that kind of stuff? That is the normal condition in Russia.

There are plenty of ducks right here in little old U. S. A. who would think they were in heaven if they were in a country where the politics is always at fever heat and working 365 days in the year.

Football season is near at hand and the Grand is about to reopen.

Wonder if these two things will add to our woes or lighten our cares?

Even a confirmed optimist will tremble until he can get a line on both.

The past is so full of spectres.

British gunboat hit a cathedral in Ostend the other day.

Germany promptly tells the world about it.

It's different when it is their cathedral.

Or rather a cathedral they had hoped to make theirs.

The Argentine government has decided that it will not declare war upon Germany at this time.

Well, unless the crowds were carrying on a fine bluff when they smashed up the German stores last week the government may have to do a little fighting right at home.

A number of very well known local citizens last night got back from a visit of a week in the peach country in the eastern part of the state.

They came in a special coach.

And it is understood that they will not be socially active for some time to come.

Rebekahs Decorate for Tonight's Celebration

Ladies of West Virginia Lodge No. 64, Daughters of Rebekah, were busily engaged in decorating their rooms in the Odd Fellows' hall on Saturday evening for the anniversary celebration this evening.

During the evening Hayden's orchestra will render musical selections and a number of recitations will be given by various members. One of the features of the occasion will be an address by Rev. Claude E. Goodwin, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal church.

The committee of arrangements is composed of Miss Iva Merrifield, chairman; Mrs. J. F. Wright, Miss Millie Evans, Mrs. Lucy Bright and Mrs. Hattie Lilly.

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NICE WEATHER FOR FIRST HALF OF WEEK

Cold and Unsettled Conditions May Characterize Second Half.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24.—The weather forecast for the week beginning September 24 is as follows:

Middle Atlantic States—Generally fair weather indicated first half of week, followed by unsettled weather, with rain, during second half. Slightly warmer after Sunday, followed by falling temperature toward end of week.

South Atlantic and East Gulf States—Generally fair weather during the week, except showers first half in South Atlantic States. No decided temperature changes.

Ohio Valley and Tennessee—Fair weather early in week, followed by showers in the Ohio Valley about Tuesday. Generally fair thereafter. Rising temperature Sunday and Monday, followed by a moderate fall later.

Region of Great Lakes—The week will open with fair and warmer weather, followed by rain about Monday or Tuesday and again toward the end of the week, with somewhat lower temperatures during the latter period. Otherwise the weather will be fair.

WHAT WEST VIRGINIA

FOLKS SAY ABOUT IT.

Parkersburg, West Va.—"I suffered with female trouble since my third child was born. I suffered and was annoyed for some time. I tried several doctors who used local applications, with little result. A lady who had similar trouble had used Dr. Pierce's Healing Suppositories with success, and I sent for some. The use of them does far more for me than any other remedy, and makes me comfortable. I am grateful for them and am glad to recommend them."—Mrs. THILLIE ANTHUR, 400 Luebeck Ave.

Lynchburg, Va.—"I can say that Favorite Prescription has proved a good remedy. I used it for the condition usual among women at forty-five. It did more than I could expect. It did me a wonderful amount of good. Only one bottle was used but the benefits were permanent."

"My husband used 'Golden Medical Discovery' for a cough and cold. He says it is the best medicine going. He gave it to the children and says that is why they are so well. We consider Dr. Pierce's remedies the standard family remedies."—Mrs. J. T. MAGNAN, 1405 Jackson St.

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well and keep good time

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